**[Hotel, shmotel -- I'll just shtay in the shtreet (Dave Barry Goes To NYC)](http://freerepublic.com/focus/news/693415/posts" \t "_self)**  
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So we went to New York City for some urban excitement, which began when we saw our hotel. To avoid hurt feelings, I will call it by a made-up name, ''The Hotel Shpennsylvania.'' It's in midtown Shmanhattan, across the street from Shmadison Square Garden.

The Hotel Shpennsylvania was apparently built around the time that North America became a separate continent. I am told that, at one time, it was quite elegant. Of course, I am also told that, at one time, Elizabeth Taylor was a virgin.

Our first whiff of the Hotel Shpennsylvania experience came when we entered the lobby, which is furnished in a functional yet practical style, consisting of: a floor. There is more seating provided on the lunar surface than in the lobby of the Hotel Shpennsylvania. This leaves plenty of room to stand, which is what we did for quite a while, in a check-in line approximately the length of the Great Wall of China, but not moving as fast. If you have a loved one who mysteriously disappeared years ago and has not been heard from since, you should consider the possibility that this person is simply attempting to check in to the Hotel Shpennsylvania.

The good news was, we finally got a room. The bad news was, it was room 436. If you ever get a chance to stay in this room, I advise you to say: ''Thanks, but I'd prefer a Dumpster, if there's one available.'' I say this because room 436 is a very Spartan. I use the word ''Spartan'' not only in the sense of ''austere,'' but also in the sense of ``last renovated in 500 B.C.''

The walls, ceiling and floor appeared to be made of compressed grime; you got the feeling that if you took a damp cloth and started wiping the walls, you would wipe a hole right into the next room. These walls had no decoration of any kind, unless you count stains. One of the window shades had fallen down, revealing a sweeping panoramic view of: a wall. There were no chairs. There were two sad old beds with mattresses that felt like they were stuffed with dead squid, and a battered desk with a sign on it informing us -- I am not making this up -- that new furniture had been ordered for the room, but it had not arrived yet. This sign appeared to be several years old.

When you turned on the bathtub taps, what came out looked like some kind of weak soup. Maybe this was a hotel selling point (``All Rooms With Hot and Cold Running Broth!'').

Of course we should have marched down to the desk and demanded a new room, or even checked out. But we did not, for two solid reasons: (1) We didn't want to wait in the lobby line again, and (2) We are shmorons.

So instead we went out for the evening. Then, like characters in a bad horror movie who, against all common sense, go down into the dark basement, we returned to room 436.

We enjoyed a restful night until about 1 a.m., when the couple next door returned to their room. This couple was really hitting it off, if you know what I mean. I did not realize that it was physically possible for humans to hit it off that many times in one night. We could hear them clearly, because compressed grime does not block sound well, and they were hitting it off with intensity, passion, and what sounded like at least four head of cattle.

During those brief periods when the couple was resting, smoking cigarettes, watering the livestock, etc., we would listen to the people in the room on the other side, who apparently were in town for the International Convention of Loud Talkers With Insomnia. They were having a fine time, the kind of time when everything is so hilarious that everybody must repeat it at least four times.

A distinct aroma drifting through the grime made us wonder if they were using shmarijuana, but of course that would be illegal, even in New York. Whatever it was, it quieted them down for brief periods, during which the couple on the other side would rouse the steers again. Before we knew it, it was dawn.

Other than that, we had a fine time in New York, a truly great city with some of the world's best museums, theaters, restaurants and shopping. Some day we will go back and actually see these things. On this trip, we mainly napped. When we do go back, we won't stay at the Hotel Shpennsylvania. We'll stay somewhere farther from the ''heart of the action.'' Such as Shmontana.